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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

27 November 1945

Dear Nick,

I have been thinking over your comment to me as to whether I had anything to offer along the lines of your Readiness Section and, although I am quite busy here demobilizing and decommissioning this PT Fleet, I have had occasions to reflect on your peculiar responsibility.

As you know, the Fleet, as such, does not really exist in any combat form for the present, with the tremendous change in personnel and with people of very little training in very responsible positions. Therefore, you may view what I have to say with some doubt.

In the first place, I want to recommend that you get back at the earliest possible moment to competition within the Naval Command. By this I mean to say that I think that you should organize the Fleet again under engineering competition and under gunnery performances. For the present it is not necessary to produce anything particularly new; it is solely necessary to get people thinking again along competitive lines.

From an engineering viewpoint I have noted repeatedly that the engineering efficiencies of the ships are very poor, and the discipline along engineering lines is, likewise, poor. In peace time, with white uniforms, the average water rate for a ship is somewhere between 16 to 20 gallons per man for all purposes, although there was an allowance, which I never fully understood, of but 10 gallons per man. Today in the Fleet water rates are very much above this, which means an excessive burning of oil and a lack of interest in engineering maintenance. Many people oppose engineering competition, and I do, too, where it permits fast pencil-pushing to defeat competent engineering, but I cannot subscribe to the idea that, because there are some crooks, the entire Navy must do away with competition.

You know, and I know, that the soul of American Life is competition. We compete in business, we compete in sports, and we even compete in religious denominations, each one of us endeavoring to draw into our church people from other denominations. I think that engineering competition was very helpful, in the past, in maintaining our engineering plants in tip-top condition and in training engineering personnel in their responsibilities along engineering lines.

As regards gunnery performances, we have a repetition of the above. The Fleet, in my mind, is seriously in need of gunnery training, especially along anti-aircraft lines, and, very frankly, I never felt that our ships were, at any time, adequately trained against suicide planes in our operations against Japan. I cannot discuss your Command because the fast carriers may have done more training, but we, in the bombardment groups, were seriously lacking in adequate preparation. Today a great portion of the trained personnel are gone,

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and we must re-train, and re-train under some competitive scheme. Shooting down sleeves is not enough, unless we have some photographic means of indicating how close the shell actually was to the target. Long range gunnery almost became a lost art in many sections of our Fleet during the war. With our modern radars we can expect very accurate results, but nothing can be done without training and without competition. Even in wartime, with death the result of failure, it was difficult to get many ships to train during the "rest" periods. The Fleet Gunnery Officer at Pearl said to me one day, "What am I going to do? I ask these ships as they near Pearl if they want gunnery exercises, and they say 'no!'" I replied, "Instead of asking them, you tell them that planes will be there at such and such a time or that their targets will be in such and such an area, and that they are expected to train using these targets!" This was done and became a standard practice at Pearl and also in many of the forward areas as well.

I haven't any doubt that many of the exercises that we used before and during the war can be changed, but I think that, beginning at least by next July 1st, if not earlier, we should give our personnel something to shoot at and to steam at in a competitive way!

There isn't any question but that we must make tests for the Atomic bomb in connection with the Fleet, and, if it appears that Congress is going to interfere in this matter, it would be well to get the tests over before the interference gets too great. I know that you have given this a lot of thought, and anything that I may say may possibly seem trite, but we must find out what formations are adequate against that bomb as soon as possible. The question of hull construction and other matters properly belongs to the Bureau of Ships, but the question of type dispositions and matters of that nature are, unless I am very much in error, entirely a function of Readiness. In discussing dispositions, I am reminded of the fact that the other day I saw, in an issue somewhere, - and I can't find where - a formation of heavy ships in column with destroyers in the van as the screen, and this was recommended as highly effective against suicide planes. I viewed this formation with great concern, because this is exactly the formation that was used by Admiral Oldendorf when first going into Lingayen Gulf. I had opposed it and had pointed out to the Admiral that we did not have adequate defense in the flanks nor early enough information of enemy planes to permit the five-inch guns to fire at a sufficiently great range to be effective. This was due, of course, to the fact that we were surrounded by land. However, we had a very narrow swept channel, and this was the only formation that we could use, if we went in. The enemy planes came in, just as forecast - were not picked up until very late, and many of our ships were heavily hit. Therefore, it appears to me that this formation was not adequate for areas where planes made approaches over land, nor, in my mind, was it satisfactory for sea either, and yet, here it was, issued, after Lingayen, as a representative formation.

It is my hope that, as a result of the tests which are being conducted in the Atlantic - of the type which were to be conducted by Vice-Admiral Lee before he died -, you may be able to obtain considerable information of value to the Fleet, and you may then be able to revise USF-10B, to bring it up-to-date with the most modern thought on Atomic bombs as well as on suicide planes.

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I also think there should be considerable torpedo training. Perhaps, new developments are under way, based on our knowledge of what the enemy had been working towards, and, in many cases, has succeeded in accomplishing. New torpedo exercises should be produced, based upon these new developments. I never really thought that our torpedo accuracy in the war was very great, and even at Surigao, the number of hits made by our destroyers was not high, partially because the ranges at which some of the destroyers fired were excessive.

In connection with post-war training, I should like to invite your attention to a staff paper sent, I think, to the CNO by ComPatron ONE in early June of this year, which is signed by Vice-Admiral Oldendorf, but, which actually, was drawn up by Admiral Deyo, by myself and by Captain Jack Cooper, Operations Officer. This paper discussed post-war training of fleet personnel. The idea advanced, is that, by the use of many of the training facilities now available in the United States at the various training centers, it should be possible to so educate and train the personnel so thoroughly that the ships will not be required to commence with the most simple exercises as was necessary prior to the War. In other words, the training on shipboard will be in advanced practices only.

This is all that I can think of at present to suggest. I realize that you have an enormous responsibility in re-training the Fleet along sound lines, which are the development of this war. Any man who could handle the Third Fleet can handle this job with ease, so I am not too concerned over this. You will probably find a lot of opposition from many people about these matters and many will want to put things off, others will say "to hell with competition", and others will just be tired. You are not tired, thank God, and I think you are open-minded, so go to it!

If I can do anything more for you out here or amplify on anything, I should only be too happy to do so.

With best wishes to you and Grace for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and with congratulations again to you for a most remarkable performance of duty in this war, I am as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN

Rear-Admiral Robert B. Carney
Staff - Chief of Naval Operations
Navy Department
Washington, D. C.

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

28 November 1945

Dear Swede,

This enclosed clipping will indicate to you how your name has traveled as far as Manila. Needless to say, I was quite astonished to read of your action, but also, needless to say, I thoroughly concurred in it. I had heard some rumor that you were thinking of quitting the Navy and going with Purdue University, probably as President, but I had heard nothing about the Hawaiian Pineapple Company.

You have made no mistake. The Hawaiian Pineapple outfit is a swell bunch of gentlemen who have done an enviable job in reorganizing their company and in making it so important during the last thirteen years. One of those responsible for this remarkable success is an old friend of mine, named Bunny Henderson. At last reports, he was one of the Vice-Presidents, but I didn't follow him too closely to find out which one, excepting this; that he had done "damn" well! I suppose that you and Bunny are great friends now. He has a marvelous wife who is a perfectly wonderful girl, and one of whom I used to be very fond years ago, although I haven't seen her recently.

It is too bad that you have decided to quit the Navy to take over this new assignment. I say this, because the Navy needs men like you, and it is important that men of character remain in high positions. No one could have been more pleased than I was, when they promoted you to be an Admiral the other day, and I had hoped that, because of that, you might decide to remain in the Navy.

I have no doubt but that your new proposition is excellent and that you have everything to gain in leaving our aggregation. I know that you love the Navy, and I know that it must have been a difficult decision to make to decide to leave all that you had worked with so successfully for the last thirty-four years and to go into a new field of endeavor. However, those same characteristics which brought you success in the Navy can not fail to bring you success in this new venture. I feel confident that the Hawaiian Pineapple Company must have looked you over with great care before they brought you into such a high position without any previous training therein. It is a great tribute to yourself and to your reputation. You are universally popular in the Navy! You are universally admired in the Navy, and, finally, you are universally respected and appreciated!

Some day when I get back to Pearl, I will come around and see you and talk over your new and your old lives. In the end they will be the same, because, whatever you do, you will always do with all of your devotion, affection, enthusiasm and color.

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I have no doubt that Emily is delighted, and I can assure you that I am also. God bless you always!

With best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, I am, as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN

Rear Admiral H. E. Overesch
Staff - Commander Hawaiian Sea Frontier
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

28 November 1945

Dear Bill and Jim,

I suppose, to hear from me, will be a great surprise, but, every now and then out here in the Philippines, my mind turns back to Hawaii and to my loyal friends of so many years. And so, with Christmas nearing, I thought that I would write you a letter to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and, at the same time, to tell you how I am.

In the first place you will know, for I have told you so many times, that you are the personification of the Hawaii that I knew when I was quite young - when I was an ensign - and Elizabeth (Bud Carter) was just a flaming beauty, who had, in a way, slain me. I remember, at that time, that there was no new Royal Hawaiian Hotel - that the Moana Hotel was everything - and that there was plenty of water and marsh-land inland from Kalakaua Avenue in that area. There was no Bank of Bishop's Building as such, and, as we know it now, no Dillingham Building, no Castle and Cooke, and I seriously doubt if the present McInerney Establishments were existent. Hawaii of today is so different that it is not until one gets into the grounds of the McInerney's or until one looks over the Pali that one has the feeling again of the old Hawaii Ned that we all know and loved so well. The influx of troops, the influx of workers, the influx of loafers in vast quantities has tended to destroy that softness of long ago. And even the favorable days, that I mention, must have appeared to you as bizarre, at that time, as the modern day does to me now, because of your early connection with King Kalakaua and the Monarchy.

You two have seen Hawaii rise from a beautiful, tropical island into a heavily populated fortress. I have no doubt that, on occasions, this tremendous change grieves you and pains you, but it had to be! The crossroads of the Pacific must necessarily be a fortress, and the planes and the highly-speeded shipping must necessarily bring many people to your enchanted islands.

A great friend of mine is about to retire from the Navy and become a Hawaiian, which plainly shows that this vast change, that I refer to, seems to him to be quite normal. I refer to Rear Admiral Harvey Overesch, who is about to leave the Hawaiian Sea Frontier, where he is Chief of Staff, and become a Vice President of the Hawaiian Pineapple Company. He is a very fine officer and gentleman, and is probably my closest friend in the Navy; so you can imagine with what surprise I read of his decision and of his choice of the Hawaiian Pineapple Company. Very frankly, I should like to have had that job myself, whatever it is, because the Pineapple Company is not only an excellent company, but it also is run by gentlemen who believe in Hawaii and its products. Admiral Overesch has been in the Navy for quite a long time, and has always made an enviable reputation for himself for his capabilities as well as for his personality. He makes friends everywhere, is a good administrator and organizer, and is respected and admired by everyone

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in the Navy, and also out of the Navy, that know him. I am glad for the Hawaiian Pineapple Company that they were lucky enough to get him, and I am glad for his sake that he was lucky enough to get with such a fine company.

I hope that this letter finds both of you in as fine health as one could expect at your age. Of course, you aren't really very old - not any older than my mother, and not nearly as old as my father, who recently turned 85. So I feel confident that you have quite a number of years more ahead of you in your charming Hawaii, and I have hopes that I will be seeing you there on and off for many years to come. I have always said that I thought more of you both, probably, than I do of anyone else in Hawaii, and I have repeated this so often that I hope that, by now, you believe it. When I shall return to Hawaii, I do not know, but, when I do, you may rest assured that the house of McInerney on Judd Street will be visited by a sailor.

We both have something in common - not only our affection for Hawaii Nei - but also the fact that you and your house received one of the bombs from the Japanese at Pearl Harbor, and I, on the Flagship, received two - one at Lingayen and one at Okinawa! However, mine were not bombs, but were enemy suicide planes, which are often worse. I was Chief of Staff. I was at Okinawa, when we landed there, and the Japanese were tough those days. As a result of Okinawa, Japan fell! So you see - you were at the beginning - "Alpha" - and I was at the ending - "Omega". There we have the combination - "Alpha and Omega" - the "Beginning and the Ending"!

I am feeling fine and have been working pretty steadily in the decommissioning and demobilization of the large Motor Torpedo Boat Command, which I have here in the Pacific. I am the Supreme Commander in the entire Pacific Ocean of all motor torpedo boats, and sometimes I wish that it were not so, because this decommissioning and demobilization job takes time and effort. However, my assigned duty along these lines is almost completed, so that, by early December, I will be fully clear of that responsibility.

I have a lot to tell both of you about my war experiences and I feel free to speak now, so that you may expect to hear a great deal some day - let's hope not too far off. When I think of the number of times that my ship has been straddled by enemy shells, and when I think of the times that enemy planes have missed me - that is, suicide planes - and when I think of the number of torpedoes from both plane and ship that I have had to dodge - and when I think of the two full hits which the ships I was on received with the consequent damage to upwards of 200 officers and men - I say, in each case, with Vice Admiral Oldendorf, "Someone has been holding a parasol over me". I certainly hope that in the years to come the Creator will see fit to maintain that parasol bearer in the same position with relation to me, no matter what the enemy may have in store.

I don't think that I have changed at all - I think I look just about the same as I did when I was there before - and I have no doubt that you both are also the same. You are the unchangeable twins, who neither time, nor worry, nor pestilence has succeeded in changing from your friendly selves.

I wish you all happiness for the New Year, and I certainly hope that your Christmas will be as gay and as merry as it always has been. I presume that you will have dinner with the Wellers, as usual, or will they have it with you?

Best wishes, and with an "Aloha Pau Ole", I am as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

1 December 1945

Dear Bob,

I can not begin to tell you with what satisfaction I received your letter of November 6th. For some reason it left San Francisco on the 18th and, therefore, I received it on the 29th. I am very glad to hear that you are your usual happy and successful self and that business is going well with your concern. I think your beloved father would have been very proud of his son, had the Creator permitted him to survive until now. You have done exceptionally well in taking over your father's ideas, and, starting as he did from scratch, in building up a vast engineering organization. Your careers parallel each other so remarkably that sometimes I can not help chuckling to myself at what I call the hereditary factor. Just look at the two careers!

Your father founded the United Engineering Works, built it up into a big corporation, sold it to the Bethlehem Steel Company, and became the General Manager for the Bethlehem Steel Company. You founded the United Engineering Works as a successor to your father's Works, you built it up into a big organization, and then you sold it to the Matson Company and then became the General Manager for them.

I wonder whether you have ever thought of this as you have labored so hard and long to bring success to yourself. I think that it was a little easier for your father than it was for you to found an organization such as yours is. In your father's day there was not so much competition - there were not so many shipyards around - and there were less people informed on shipbuilding, and there were few labor troubles. When you built your concern, there was plenty of competition, and, besides that, there was an enormous depression, and yet, out of this, you have not only built an engineering concern which did wonderful repair work and built for itself an enviable reputation, but you also contributed heavily to our industrial effort in this war by not only repairing many United States ships, but in building many excellent tugs. You can feel very proud of your share in this war!

I know exactly how you feel when you say, "I am still working for Matson in the same old job in name, at least, but I am no longer the Big Flag, although I have the title and the pay". There is a singular satisfaction in being your own boss, and that is part of our American heritage - the desire for independence in everything.

Your young Bobby, I regret to read, is just about the same. What an unfortunate accident that was which confined him so! And what a blow it has been to you and to Frances to see your own flesh and blood staggering under such a heavy load! I always thought, when I saw him that his own courage was a remarkable tribute to both you and Frances and to your devotion to him. I don't

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believe that he could bear his burden, were it not for the fact that both of you think so much of him and are so thoughtful of him, that he can not do otherwise than face disaster with a smile. He is a courageous lad, and, once again, he characterizes, within himself, that same Christy fortitude which gave you and your father your own success. You both fought through odds to victory, and your son is trying to do the same. I don't want to give all the credit, however, to the Christy's. I think that Frances, herself, the mother who bore this child in her womb and watched him grow, has also had to face her Cavalry. I watch her when I am home, and, out of her, I get strength myself. I have never seen a sign which, in any way, would permit me or young Bobby to feel that, what had happened to him, was, in any way, a blow or a detriment to his mother. She is a wonderful girl, Bob; young Bobby knows it, and so do you!

Thanks very much for your friendly remarks concerning my services in this war. I have done the best I could with what I had, and I have been told by as high officers as Admiral Nimitz, himself, that my work was outstanding! I have been in more battles, I presume, than the vast majority of officers - almost more than any. I have been shelled, bombed, suicide-dived, and fired at with torpedoes, and I am here alive because the Good Lord so willed it! I feel that I have devoted myself to the study of war more than have most officers, and I feel that my years at the War College as Chief Instructor have borne fruit, not only to me, but to our Navy in this war. I had two Admirals recently - separately - say that they thought I knew more about war than almost any officer in the Navy. I don't believe that this is so, but I certainly think that I rank well at the top. Without being critical of the Admirals, I think that I know far more about war and combat than almost any of them. Admiral Nimitz assigned me to the finest job that a Commodore could have in the Navy - Commander of Motor Torpedo Boat Squadrons Pacific Fleet - and I had an enormous Command, both of motor torpedo boats, tenders, and bases, and I was getting ready to devastate the Japanese, when they saw some of my PT boats at Okinawa, and it so frightened them that they quit. Some people tried to say that the Atomic bomb beat the Japs, others say it was the Russians, others think it was air-power, but the answer is not that at all. The answer is this; it was Bates and his PT boats.

I am demobilizing and decommissioning my Motor Torpedo Boat Command now, to a degree, and I am progressing very well. My Command will still remain in the Pacific, I think, at least for the present, but it will not be the great Command that it was.

I don't know what is going to happen to me, as I haven't heard anything nor have I written to anyone about it. I think that, if the Navy functioned on merit alone, I might possibly have a different assignment from now on, and I probably will, but what it is to be, or where it is to be, I do not know.

As you can see from the address, I am here at Leyte, P.I., and every now and then I start day-dreaming and remember our arrival in this area, where, with Vice-Admiral Oldendorf as the Commander and myself as Chief of Staff, we

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met mines and suicide planes. But in three days of battle, we hammered the Japanese into reasonable submission and succeeded in clearing the way for transports. Then, on about 25 October, we fought the famous battle of Surigao Strait, where we annihilated the Japanese Fleet coming up from the South. It was a tremendous victory and one the Japanese, even now, don't like to talk about. I can assure you that the plans were based on War College principles. It proved conclusively that our training at the War College was sound.

I want to wish you all happiness for the New Year, and I know that you will have it. Likewise, I wish you and your family a most Merry Christmas. I know that I have no better friends in the world than the Robert E. Christy's. I have always appreciated your friendliness to me, and I like the way in which, at intervals, you go around and see my father and mother. They are a wonderful couple to me, and I thank the Creator that he has seen fit to allow them to remain with me so long. My father is now 85 years of age, and he and my mother have been married over sixty years. I hope that you will see fit to drop in and see them again and again when you have time.

With warmest personal regards to yourself, and many, many thanks for your thoughtful letter, I am as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Mr. Robert E. Christy
United Engineering Company, Limited
293 Stewart Street
San Francisco 5, California

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

1 December 1945

Dear Tom, "the Alley Cat",

I heard with great start the other day, and, I can assure you, with considerable concern, that you were at the New York Naval Hospital undergoing some sort of treatment. A little later I heard that you had improved rapidly and were back again in your new Command. I can not begin to tell you how glad I am to hear that you have recovered, and I hope that it means that from now on you will be perfectly well. You have been entitled to some hospitalization for a very long time, and I hope that this time you have got enough of it to insure health.

I always admired you greatly out here in the Pacific, when, with your bad back, you fought the wars. You never complained at all, although, on more than one occasion, I realized that you were under great pain. I particularly remember the time we sounded General Quarters and you fell in the darkness and suffered not only shock, but also pain from your disorder. Even then you kept up that courage which has carried you through more battles than probably any other officer in the Navy. You are a fighting man of the first water, and everybody in the Navy knows it! No one could have expected, therefore, anything else from you than that inflexible will to carry through to victory!

I remember when they took you away from the War College, long before you had finished your course, and sent you to sea to conduct the first convoys to Iceland and elsewhere. I remember then that you moved to and fro over the Atlantic in its most dangerous waters, and even up as far north as Murmansk, where, on more than one occasion, the Germans attacked your convoys enroute to Russia. I remember then that you were with the Home Fleet, where you gained the respect of the British High Command, and finally, I remember that you came out into the Pacific where, I think, you did a perfectly wonderful job. You lost a ship once, the CHICAGO, but wars are never won without losses, and other Commanders lost ships also. Halsey did, and Nimitz did, and Spruance did, and Turner did, and Oldendorf did, and many, many others did. So if you ever have any feeling about the loss of the CHICAGO, and, I suppose that you do, you have every right to forget it, except as one of those losses incident to a great victory!

One of the reasons that we won this war was because the Navy was willing to close with the enemy. This is something that the Japanese had not anticipated. I do not think that anyone in the Navy was more willing to close with the enemy than you were. This is one of the lessons I drew from you when I served as your Flag Captain on the MINNEAPOLIS. You dashed out of the formation on more than one occasion, with others following, heading towards the enemy. This fighting quality of yours, plus also your ability to command, are among those military characteristics which caused the Navy Department several years ago to

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list your name to President Roosevelt as one of their outstanding Commanders, and I was told you were reported as probably the outstanding Commander at that time in the war. My association with you along these lines bore heavy fruit when I was Chief of Staff for Vice-Admiral Oldendorf. I think that my actions and advice were governed, in part, by that association with you.

I was glad to see that Swede Overesch was made a Rear-Admiral the other day - it should have happened long ago - and the reason that it did not happen is unknown to me. Swede has talked to me many times about it, and he seemed to have some ideas on the subject, but, of course, no one really knows. He is the first of your real "Alley Cats" to break into the treasured circle. I have been repeatedly recommended, myself, for this circle, and I have been asked by nearly every Admiral in this area - that is, the Western Pacific - why I had not made it. But that, I cannot say. Honestly, I do not know. I have done the best with what I had, and some people have been kind enough to say that what I have done has been "damn" good, but unfortunately, it appears as if in Washington that combat successes have not weighed too heavily.

I hope that you will remember me most kindly to Mrs. Giffen when you write to her, and I hope that you, yourself, are the same old Ike Giffen that all of us knew and loved so well.

I wish you a most Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year. You are certainly entitled to both.

With warmest personal regards, I am as ever,

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Vice-Admiral Robert Giffen
Commander Service Force, Atlantic Fleet
c/o Fleet Post Office
New York, New York

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

4 December 1945

Dear Frances and Judge,

It has been an awfully long time since you have heard from me, and yet I want you to know that it has not been a very long time since I have thought of you! I am always thinking of you both, as I don't know of anyone, anywhere, who has been more thoughtful or kind towards me, nor do I know anyone whom I can call "friend" better than you two.

I remember when I was in Washington in February that you were very considerate then, and put yourselves out of the way a great deal in order to insure that I had a pleasant time. I think that it is quite remarkable that you two can be so happy and give so much happiness to others, as you always seem to do. I hear rumors that your abilities in this line have made you great friends with Secretary and Mrs. Forrester and with others of equally high rank, including your old friend, Admiral Jacobs, who was moved out of Washington for some reason. No one here seems to know why this happened, but the belief seems to be that he was running too much of a personal machine, and many officers were suffering because of it. I hope that it is not so! I like to think that our High Command functions entirely on merit procedure, but, unfortunately, this seems to be pure idealism because, as you know, it does not!

I have been out here in the Pacific now going on 29 months and, except for that short trip to Washington under orders from Admiral Nimitz, I haven't been in the States at all. I am now demobilizing and decommissioning the Motor Torpedo Boat Fleet and, when that is done, I don't know what the future holds in store for me. As you probably know, I was made a Commodore last April; although I had been recommended for it months before then, as well as for Rear Admiral, and once this Command is dissolved or is reduced to a small unit, the need for a Flag Officer will no longer exist. Therefore, it is quite probable that, within a reasonable time, I will be moved out of this area home and will get some new assignment. What it is to be, I don't know, but I can't get excited over it because, from the treatment I have had in the last year from Washington, I cannot imagine much improvement to be expected now, even though Admiral Nimitz is in power. I think that I have always enjoyed a very favorable reputation with Admiral Nimitz, and I have been told repeatedly by everyone out here that my combat record was "swell", but nothing like that has much effect in Washington! I can see from here what Judge went through long ago, because I heard it said everywhere then that Judge was one of the ablest officers of his time, and, judging from the jobs which he has been given since, it is evident that they still think so. But they never promoted him, and, to this day, I don't know why!

I wrote a letter to our little friend, Frances Rich, the other day, which, I hope, she will be surprised to get and pleased to get. I liked her very much

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and thought she was a very intelligent and attractive woman, and her association and friendship with you indicated that her other qualities were equally as favorable. I don't know whether she is still in the Service or not, but should I, by any chance, arrive in California, I plan to call her home in Santa Barbara and perhaps tease her some more about her dragging feet and what have you. If she is there in Washington, say "hallo" for me.

I am glad to see that everyone at home in Alameda seems to be fine and healthy. Young Dickie, Jocelyn's eldest, was out here in Leyte - flying from Palawan to Borneo in a B-25 - but he went home the other day, and I don't know whether he plans to remain in the Army or not. He may get married when he returns, as he has a very charming young lady waiting for him. But, unless he stays in the Army, he will be very unwise to enter into matrimony, no matter how great the urge, until he completes college and has a decent job. I have told him this, and he knows it's true, but you know how young people are; so, I make no bets!

The Navy seems to have put up a pretty good fight against the Army. I hope that you attended the game. There is always a possibility of an up-set, so, on that score, I was disappointed. Nevertheless, when one reads the dispatches, one cannot but be impressed with the power of the Army team. It must be a "lulu"!

I want to wish you all happiness for the New Year. As for Christmas, I know that you will enjoy it as you always have.

With warmest personal regards, I am as ever

Your old pal,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Captain & Mrs. Herbert W. Underwood, USN
Navy Barracks
18th and "G" Streets, NW
Washington, D. C.

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

4 December 1945

Dear Sully,

I received your card, announcing that you had resumed the general practice of law, with a great deal of friendly interest, because I had wondered where you were. I remember that you had received orders to Washington, so either you went to Washington and were released from there, or else you have just completed your terminal leave.

I am awfully glad to see that you are on your own again, and I have no doubt but that that clever brain of yours, plus those strong political connections, will give you the rapid success to which you are entitled.

I don't hear very much from Admiral Oldendorf now, because he has shifted his Flag twice, and mail that I have addressed to his Flag is probably running around the ocean. Admiral Oldendorf is to be Commandant of the Eleventh Naval District in San Diego, so when you do down that way, you must look him up, because he was very fond of you. You fitted into his scheme of things very well, and you were very loyal. We really had quite a gang there running his Staff, even though they were nearly all Irishmen.

I was very glad when Admiral Oldendorf gave you the Legion of Merit. When I have seen the activities through which our personnel have been operating, and have seen the awards which we gave for combat service and then have seen the awards which others have given for nothing, I would say that you are entitled to even more than a Legion of Merit.

I never did get that DSM for which I was recommended by Admiral Oldendorf, and when I objected to the Legion of Merit I think I got in the "dog house" with the Seventh Fleet, and, particularly, with Admiral Kinkaid. It is all perfectly silly, because Admiral Kinkaid should know that those of us who worked with him admire him greatly and think that he ran a splendid campaign here in the Philippines. Naturally, we did not like the assumption of victory that was given to him for the Battle of Surigao instead of to Admiral Oldendorf, but those matters are usual in life, and in the end, it was that "damn" publicity section of his and not the Admiral! He is going to be in your area presently - I presume, to relieve Admiral Ingersoll - and you should drop in and see him just to pass the time of day. He is a little unusual to talk to and that must not alarm you; just be yourself!

I am demobilizing and decommissioning the Motor Torpedo Boat Command now, and it is not improbable that the whole job will be completed in a couple of weeks. It has been quite an undertaking, but has been - even though I say it - most effectively done!

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I don't know what will happen to me once this job is fully completed, but certainly there will be no longer a COMINTREPacFlt, and I will possibly revert to Captain, or will be assigned a Commodore's billet somewhere else. It all depends on Admiral Nimitz, I guess, but with Admiral King still up there pulling the strings, I can't and don't hope for too much. No matter what happens to me in the future, nothing can ever take away from me the pride I had in my services in the war and in my associations made during combat with men like yourself. We carried the ball a long way against heavy opposition, and the score at the end of the game is, in a large way, a great tribute to our play. We have made many Admirals in this war who haven't even smelled powder, nor have they seen their comrades die for their Flag. Many - such as these - I sympathize with, but you, being a politician, understand the situation. I was interested in your comment about me, that is, "an intrepidly intelligent Naval officer". I have tried to figure this one out, but I like to think that you mean, "used my brain in a sensible as well as bold manner". However, whatever it means, I have no doubt but that it is a friendly expression from a friend!

I may be on the Coast one of these days, and, if I am, I will look you up, but don't count on it, as I know absolutely nothing concerning my future activities.

Let me wish you all happiness for the Yule Tide Season, and with many, many appreciations of my friendship and association with you and of your competence as a man, I am as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Commander J. Joseph Sullivan, USNR (Released)
2314 Shell Building
San Francisco, California

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

4 December 1945

My dear Mr. Mayo:

It has come to my attention that you are about to leave the Naval Service and are going to return to civilian life. I can not permit you to go without thanking you for your services to the Navy and to the Country during this, the greatest of all wars.

Your service on my Staff has not been for a very long time, but in the few months that you have been with me, I have found your knowledge of ship repair and construction of extreme value. As you know, it became necessary for me to recommend to the Department those motor torpedo boats which appeared unworthy of saving for disposal. I, therefore, appointed you a member of a board upon whose recommendation a great many motor torpedo boats would be saved or destroyed. I had occasion to see this board functioning repeatedly and to observe your work, not only here at Leyte, but also in instructing my motor torpedo boats at Okinawa. In both cases, you demonstrated capability, loyalty, and confidence, and I think that our success in decommissioning the PT Fleet, with the thorough approval of the Chief of Naval Operations, is due, in part, to your successful work. I, therefore, wish to express to you my appreciation of your services, so effectively rendered, and to bid you Godspeed and all success in your career in civilian life.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I am

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Chief Carpenter W. H. Mayo, USNR
Staff - CommTBronsPacFlt
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

5 December 1945

Dear Admiral Moreell:

With your elevation to four stars I feel that I should write you a letter to congratulate you upon your share in bringing victory to our Flag. I had been in the forward areas somewhat over two years when the war ended, and I had enjoyed an excellent opportunity of observing the functioning of your Command in these areas. Of course, owing to publicity and to remarkable performances, the general public considers that the Bureau of Yards and Docks, of which you were the head, was solely composed of the Sea Bees. Nothing could be farther from the truth, and yet, the performance of these extraordinary units in the Pacific Islands could not have been better, and their success in building airfields, docks and bases of all kinds, could not have been excelled by any power; and nothing has contributed more than they did towards victory. There are, however, many other items with which your office was charged, such as the great floating drydocks, a number of which are in the area of Manicani Island, and in one of which my Flagship will probably be docked tomorrow.

Many people think that these drydocks - except possibly for the drydock Denoy - are merely a war development, but I know much better. I was in War Plans of the Bureau of Engineering, and I remember then, back in 1936, that the Bureau of Yards and Docks was already completing plans for drydocks of all sizes to be used in the Pacific. Yours was a far-seeing Bureau, and as I look at the various weapons and devices designed by our own Navy Department for victory in this war, I can not but be impressed by the success of your Bureau in its share of this advanced thinking.

For all of this success, everyone blamed you! Yours is believed to be the creative and guiding brain, yours, the leadership, and your promotion the other day to four stars was a just promotion for your share in this victory!

Sometimes there is criticism within the Naval Command when a Commander is advanced to be a Chief of a Bureau. When you, as a Commander, became Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, there was universal approval. I know one or two Captains in your Corps who objected loudly to me, but that was purely from personal pain; not even they failed to extol your capabilities. It is nice for me now to look back at that time and to see the accuracy of the guiding hand which chose you and recommended you to the President. That guiding hand should get a decoration itself!

With warmest personal regards to you, and with best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, I am

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN

Admiral Ben V. Moreell
Chief of Material
Navy Department
Washington, D. C.

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

4 December 1945

Dear Cochran:

As Christmas approaches, and as the decommissioning of the PT Fleet nears its end, I am seizing this time to write to a few of those Commanders, who, I think, are in a large way responsible for our victories in both oceans. Certainly, you are high on this list!

You are Chief of a great material Bureau, and, as such, have had enormous responsibilities in connection with the design, construction, and repair of ships. This was a very vital "trust" in the recent war, and yet, I wonder how many people in the Fleet have given due recognition to this fact. Having served with the Carrier Task Forces and having seen the remarkable performances of our carriers and our new battleships, in particular, to say nothing of our cruisers and destroyers; and having served with the Amphibious Command for months, and having partaken in many landings from the Gilberts to Okinawa, and having seen the multitude of new type craft - both command type, such as the AGCs, and the actual combat and landing types, such as LSTs, LCIs, LSMs, and the many other landing boats incident to beach operations - I cannot fail to appreciate the fact that our design conceptions, as produced fundamentally by your Bureau, are well above that of any contemporary Navy.

I should say, therefore, that our success in the Pacific could not have been achieved at all, and it is quite possible that our success in the Atlantic might also have been doubtful, had it not been for the extraordinary ability of yourself and your Staff, both Naval and civilian, of which your great Bureau is composed. The study of Logistics was ignored in our Navy before the war; it became highly important during the war; and unless we are very careful, it will die now that the war is successfully won. In their thoughts on Logistics, I think people are more inclined to include provisions, stores, ammunition, fuel, and even personnel, and to omit the design and construction of ships, as basic Logistics. This, of course, is a great error in public thinking.

In the Pacific ComServPac operated a Fleet Maintenance Office of exceptionally high character. I think that your choice of Rear Admiral H. T. Smith, as Fleet Maintenance Officer, and of Captain Wesley Hagne as his assistant, was one of the wisest choices for any assignment in this war. These two officers maintained in the Pacific the exceptionally high standard which your Bureau evidently had established for itself in Washington. I wrote a letter to Admiral Smith the other day to point out to him that the ability of the Fleet Maintenance Officer, Pacific, to keep ships repaired, overhauled, and operating, was as responsible for our success as any other item.

There can be no doubt but that the Bureau of Ships carried on most successfully throughout this war, and that, under your guidance, it contributed its

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fair share to victory.

At the present moment it seems to be doing equally well in its post war problems, at least here at Manicani Island where its representative, Captain George Holderness, Jr., has been of invaluable assistance to me in my decommissioning of the Motor Torpedo Boat Command.

With best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and with congratulations again for your success, I am

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Vice Admiral Edward L. Cochrane
Chief of the Bureau of Ships
Navy Department
Washington, D. C.

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

6 December 1945

Dear Swede,

I have been planning to write to you for a very long time, but it seems that, as time goes on, even the best intentions to one's best friends fail of realization.

Not long ago, our good friend "Legs" Leggett, who has done so well out here, passed through here on his way to the Charleston Navy Yard, where he is to be the Manager of the Navy Yard, and we talked of you; and he gave me your address, which promptly blew away, and I haven't discovered it. Therefore, I am addressing this communication to the University, knowing that they will forward it to you, if you are no longer there.

I often think about you and wonder how you are, but nearly every advice that I have indicates that you are in quite good shape but working too hard. I wrote you a letter about that before, and I hope that it bore a little fruit. You are a clever fellow with "sword or pen", so I know that, if you cannot keep busy with the sword, you will with the pen! I have no doubt also that the write-up that you made on Submarines for the Encyclopedia Britannica (or was it Americana) is excellent, but you must not overwork yourself on those things.

I am still out here in Leyte, and I am demobilizing and decommissioning my Motor Torpedo Boat Command completely. At first it was planned to maintain the Command in a reduced status, but it appears now as if it will entirely disappear. That will mean that I will be getting a new job somewhere, but where, I don't know. Everything in the Navy seems to be so questionable today that it becomes difficult for any of us out in these forward areas to realize what it is all about. It is quite possible that our perspective here is much better than it is there in Washington, because the tinsel is not with us, and we can think freely concerning our own problems.

I can frankly say that if anyone ever could enjoy a war, I have enjoyed this one! I have been through many actions, all of which were highly successful, and I have been in other positions as well where I was equally successful, such as Chief of Strategy for the War College, and operating the PTs. The belief is, apparently, that we are doing a faster job decommissioning the PTs than was anticipated, by a long margin, which is good to hear, if true.

Your beloved submarines made a very remarkable name for themselves in this war. I imagine that you know more about this than I do, not only because of your affection for them, but because of your assignment with that Encyclopedia. My interest is not at all academic. It is based on the thought that, if our

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submarines hadn't done more than their share of work, the Jap submarines would have. The loss of the INDIANAPOLIS is an example of what I refer to. I wrote Charlie Lockwood a letter about the performance of his submarines a little while ago, and I got a wonderful letter back from him, which was highly appreciative of my interest. Apparently, Naval officers rarely write to one another to express their opinion of the success of one another's performance. I don't feel that way! And so, I have written to probably 30 officers of various senior rank, since the war ended, complimenting them upon their share of the war and, in practically every case, the reply has been extraordinarily moving.

I wonder whether you are to be re-retired now that everything is over, or whether you are being retained to continue the work, along educational lines, in which you seem to be so eminently successful. When Naval officers are retired for one reason or another, they, generally, have a very difficult time reorienting themselves to their new associations and life. Very often they crack-up, as it were! You, fortunately, have been able to pass through this phase a little better than many others. Officers have spoken to me about leaving the Navy, now that the war is over, and I have always asked them what they plan to do if they quit. It's one thing to talk about quitting, but when it has been your life for so many years, and when it means so much to you - not financially, necessarily, but because of the remarkable associations you have made - you must weigh, in the balance, your happiness in your new association compared to the happiness you have had and will have among your associates in the Navy!

I, personally, am very fond of the Navy, and I seem to have many friends. I didn't know that I had so many friends until my Staff was sent by me, piecemeal, to different areas to look over that area and to study its problems. Each Staff member came back, and each told me the same thing - that the minute my name was mentioned, nothing was too good for them, and the messages, they brought back, bore that same imprint of good will and good fellowship. This is that inexplorable tie which the Navy has for its members, and, especially, for its members who like people as I do.

Washington has not been very kind to me during this war; in fact, it has been unkind, and recommendations concerning me and my advancement have always met a cool ear from the Head Men there, although these recommendations came from the Head Men here. The natural instinct is to get sore and want to quit. I haven't any doubt but that good jobs await Naval officers of experience who decide to quit and go into a new field. I have been thinking of it myself, but actually only "thinking" and not "weighing" too heavily yet! Swede Overesch, on the other hand, quit, the other day, and I know that he quit in pique. His new job may be excellent, and I have no doubt but that he will do very well in it, but I wonder, after all, whether he will enjoy it. If you don't know what his job is, he has been made a Vice-President of the Hawaiian Pineapple Company, in charge of industrial relations and publicity. I frankly say that I would not want that job, because I don't want to live in Hawaii. I like Hawaii very much, but one has to be born there to live there always.

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I expect to have this Command demobilized and decommissioned before Christmas, and then Washington will probably take a hand and order me to a new assignment, as I said in the beginning of this letter. So far I have heard nothing which would indicate, in any way, if anyone there was thinking of me, excepting that Mick Carney wrote me a letter and asked me if I had any recommendations to make concerning his new job of "Readiness". I wrote quite a letter back, which I hope he will find valuable.

I am enclosing a check for \$37.50 for the purchase of Victory Bonds for your two daughters as a little Christmas reminder of their charm and loveliness. Some day I hope to see them again, because I think they are wonderful. As for yourself and Ibby, I hope that you will take care of yourselves - will have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year - and will some day, when you get time, drop me a note to tell me about yourselves and your own beloved family.

Best wishes for the Christmas Season. I am as ever,

Your old pal,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Captain E. E. Hazlett
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

7 December 1945

Dear Lieutenant Cross:

In a day or so you will be leaving this Command and returning home for release. Although you have been Squadron Commander of Squadron 37 but a short time, during that time you have displayed fine qualities of leadership and have succeeded in decommissioning your squadron in excellent time. All of your boats were reported to be well above the average in physical condition. As a matter of fact, I was very proud of you and of your squadron, when I heard the reports of the inspecting boards, after they had inspected your squadron.

Squadron 37 arrived in the Tulagi Islands Area of the British Solomon Islands early in 1944. It was then moved north and patrolled in the Treasury, Bougainville, and Choiseul Areas. All patrols were negative, but they were excellent training, and you, as a section leader, were given an unparalleled opportunity to train under combat conditions. That you availed yourself adequately of this training has been evidenced in your Command.

As the war shifted to the north, six boats of your squadron moved north, and on August 9th arrived at Okinawa. There they engaged in air-sea rescue duties until they were brought to Samar for decommissioning. At the same time, the six boats which had been left at Espiritu Santo were moved north to Samar where they were also decommissioned.

With the decommissioning of your squadron and your departure from this area, I want to wish you all happiness in your future activities, and I particularly hope that you will see fit to continue your medical studies because the same qualities you displayed in handling your personnel should go a long way in helping you in the practice of medicine. Should you decide to remain in the Navy, I have no doubt but that you will do equally well.

I hope that in civilian life, should you choose that as your life endeavor, you will always remember your days in the Navy with happiness and will give the Navy your support when it needs it in future years.

With best regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Lieutenant J. J. Cross, Jr., USNR
Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron 37
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

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MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SQUADRONS PACIFIC FLEET
Office of the Commander

7 December 1945

Dear Lieutenant Agnew:

In a day or so you will have been detached from this Command and will be returning home for release from active service.

I can not permit you to leave without expressing to you my deep gratification at the extraordinarily capable manner with which you handled your responsibilities as Material Officer during the decommissioning of this Command. You have proven yourself to be most capable and industrious, and your devotion and loyalty has saved me many anxious hours and has saved many man-hours, which might otherwise have been lost, during the decommissioning.

You came to me on the recommendation of other officers who knew you well, although I did not know you at all. Your devotion to your duty and to your Flag were marked then by me, because of the fact that you were willing to serve overtime, although you were eligible for release, in order to facilitate the decommissioning of the ships and thus to assist in permitting the early return home of many of the personnel, and also to assist in reducing the load of the taxpayers.

You are a very friendly and personable officer, and it is too bad that you are, apparently, not physically fit to remain in the Naval Service. The Navy can use men like you.

Upon your return to civilian life, I wish you all happiness in your chosen endeavors, and I know that you will be successful. My only request to you is this - that you will be ever mindful of the Navy's interests and will give it your full support when needed.

With warmest personal regards and best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, I am

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES
Commodore, USN.

Lieutenant W. B. Agnew, USNR
Staff - COMMBTRonsPacFlt
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

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